## Message Text

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SUBJECT: EC CROP ESTIMTES FOR 1976

REF: (A) 76 EC BRUSSELS 11369, (B) 76 EC BRUSSELS 11854

1. SUMMARY: A REPORT JUST RLEASED BY THE EC STATISTICAL OFFICE ESTIMATES 1976 EC GRAIN PRODUCTION AT 89.3 MILLION M.T., DOWN 2.1 MILLION TONS FROM THEIR NOVEMBER ESTIMATE. THE REPORT ESTIMATES 1976 POTATO PRODUCTION AT 28.6 MILLION TONS, HIGHER THAN THE NOVEMBER ESTIMATE BUT STILL DOWN ABOUT 15 PERCENT FROM LAST YEEAR. THE SUGAR BEET HARVEST IS ESTIMATED TO BE DOWN FROM 1975, BUT RAW SUGAR PRODUCTION IS EXPECTED TO INCREASE SLIGHTLY. THE REPORT ALSO CONTAINS SOME PRELIMINARY DATA ON SOWINGS OF WINTER GRAINS IN SEVERAL MEMBER STATES. END SUMMARY.

2. THE COMMISSION'S STATISTICAL OFFICE HAS JUST RELEASED NEW ESTIMATES FOR 1976 CROP RODUCTTION, THEIR ESTIMATE FOR GRAIN PRODUCTION (EXCLUDING RICE) IS NOW 89.3 MILLION TONS-DOWN 2.1 MILLION TONS FROM THEIR NOVEMBER ESTIMATE (REF.A), UNCLASSIFIED

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AND SUBSTANTIALLY BELOW LAST YEAR'S CROP OF 97.3 MILLION TONS. THE DECREASE IN PRODUCTION IS DUE TO THE 8 PERCENT DECREASE IN YIELDS RESULTING RROM THE PROLONGED DROUGHT. THE NEW ESTIMATES ARE COMPARED WITH 1975 PRODUCTION AND AVERAGE PRODUCTION IN THE PERIOD 1971-1975 BELOW:

AVERAGE

1976 1975 1971-1975

METRIC TONS (MILLIONS)

WHEAT 38.3 38.1 41.3

SOFT 34.8 33.9 37.7

DURUM 3.5 4.3 3.6

RYE (INCLUDING MIXED SINTER GRAINS) 2.9 2.9 3.5

BARLEY 29.8 32.3 33.3

OATS (INCLUDING MIXED SUMMER GRAINS) 7.1 9.4 10.2

CORN 11.0 14.1 14.5

TOTAL GRAIN EXCLUDING RICE 89.3 97.3 103.1

RICE (MUSKED) 0.81 0.85 0.80

THE REPORT NOTES THAT THE ESTIMATES FOR CORN ARE STILL QUITE TENTATIVE.

3. THE REPORT ALSO CONTAINS ESTIMATES OF A NUMBER OF OTHER CROPS AS FOLLOWS:

AVERAGE

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1976 1975 1971-1975

METRIC TONS (MILLIONS)

POTATOES 28.6 33.5 40.1

SUGAR BEETS 72.9 76.8 68.9

SUGAR (F.O. LICHT ESTIMATE) 10.4 10.2 8.9

RAPESEED 1.1 1.0 1.1

THOUSAND METRIC TONS

HOPS 39.9 44.8 45.7

THE REPORT NOTES THAT, IN THE CASE OF RAPESEED AND SUGAR BEETS, DATA HAVE NOT YET BEEN RECEIVED FROM ALL MEMBER STATES; FOR THESE PRODUCTS, THE ABOVE FIGURES ARE EXTRAPOLATIONS BASED ON

INCOMPLETE DATA. THE REPORT ESTIMATES (ON THE BASIS OF VERY INCOMPLETE DATA) THAT PRODUCTION OF GREEN FORAGE DECREASED BY ABOUT 25 PERCENT IN 1976 LARGELY AS A RESULT OF THE EXTREMELY POOR YIELDS OBTAINED ON THE SECOND CUTTING. THE 1976 HARVEST OF PULSES AND FORAGE BEETS IS ESTIMATED TO HAVE DECREASED ABOUT 25 AND 20 PERCENT, RESPECTIVELY.

4. OUTLOOK FOR 1977. THE EAREAS SOWN TO GRAIN THIS ATUUMN IN GERMANY ARE ESTIMATED AS FOLLOWS AS COMPARED WITH 1975:

WINTER WHEAT, -1 PERCENT; WINTER RYE, 46 PERCENT, WINTER BARLEY, 48 PERCENT: WINTER RAPESEED, PLUS 19 PERCENT. IT IS FELT THATT THE SNOW COVER HAS FOR THE MOST PART PROTECTED WINTER GRAINS FROM FREEZING TEMPERATURES. IN FRANCE, SOWINGS OF WITNER GRAINS WERE, AS OF CECMEMBER 1, 1976, ABOUT 3 PERCENT LESS THAN THOSE OF A YEAR EARLIER. SOWINGS OF WITER WHEAT WERE 3.4 MILLION HECTARES AS COMPARED WITH 3.5 MILLION HECTARES AT UNCLASSIFIED

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THE START OF DECEMBER 1975, WHILE SOWINGS OF WINTER RYE WERE 105,000 HECTARES AND 940,000 HECTARS RESPECIVELY (AS COMPARED WITH 110,000 AND 720,000 IN 1975). AUTUMN RAINS ARE SAID TO HAVE RESTORED THE WATER TABLE AND IF WHEATHER CONDITIONS REMAIN NORMAL, FAVORABLE CROP GROWTH IS FORESEEN. BOTH IN ITALY AND THE UK RAINS INTERFERED WITH AUTUMN SOWINGS.HINTON

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